

## **Continuum of Care Narrative**

### **Homelessness Objectives**

- Provide a variety of housing options, with services, for homeless individuals and families. Support the development of housing at appropriate sites, at a scale that ensures neighborhood compatibility. Ensure the provision of adequate on site services.
- Prevent extremely low and low-income families and individuals from becoming homeless.
- Address emergency shelter and transitional housing needs of homeless individuals and families with children.
- Help homeless persons, including persons with special needs, make the transition to permanent housing and independent living.

### **Continuum of Care Objectives**

- To sustain and expand efforts to prevent homelessness, so that as few as possible individuals and families become homeless.
- To maintain and expand access of homeless persons to programs and services which can meet their basic human needs, so that to the extent that they are willing to accept such assistance, every homeless individual and family has, at a minimum, a safe place to sleep, food, clothing and necessary health care.
- To maximize the number of homeless individuals/families who, with the help of resources available through the Cambridge Continuum of Care, are able to obtain housing and develop the necessary skills, resources and self-confidence to sustain that housing and maximize their self-determination.

The Cambridge Continuum of Care continued to be an active planning entity for homeless service planning and coordination. Service providers and consumers attended monthly meetings to identify needs and gaps in available services. The City was the lead agency for the SuperNOFA application and used the monthly meetings to gather input and set priorities.

## **FY04 Funding Sources and Activities**

**McKinney Supportive Housing Program:** These funds were contracted out to local sponsors, which provided for services such as:

- Transitional housing;
- Permanent supported housing;
- Supported employment;
- Housing placement assistance;
- Field-based case management;
- Legal assistance;
- Representative payee services;
- Drop in services; and
- Street outreach.

Current Continuum of Care:

- 29 active Supportive Housing Program contracts;
- 1 active Shelter Plus Care contract under the aegis of the Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP); and
- 1 Shelter Plus Care contract under the aegis of the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) during FY 2003.

The 2003 SuperNOFA resulted in approximately \$2 million, which was used to help fund:

- 3 new permanent supported housing projects, including scattered site leasing and supportive services for 38 homeless persons with disabilities, and eight units of public-housing-based units for older homeless persons with disabilities;
- one-year renewal of 7 ongoing homeless-serving programs, including permanent supported housing (8 units), transitional housing (2 programs serving 11 families and 4 individuals), and supportive services only programs (street outreach, housing search support, drop-in center, specialized legal services), as well as expanded implementation of our Continuum-wide HMIS (homeless management information systems).

In addition to sustaining the 7 ongoing homeless-serving programs funded in this past year's SuperNOFA, previous SuperNOFA applications (FY00, FY01, and FY02) helped fund:

- development of 15 units of permanent supported housing (PSH) for 11 individuals and four families;
- continued operation of 22 units of transitional housing for individuals
- continued operation of 10 supportive services only programs, including field-based case management, mental health street outreach, fiduciary (money management and representative payee) services, substance abuse relapse prevention, drop-in programming and clinical services for street youth, educational services, family health care case management services, post-placement stabilization services for families, housing search assistance, and voicemail services.

An outreach/drop-in program for disengaged homeless women terminated its small reliance on HUD funding this past year, so as to absolve itself of participation in HMIS, which staff felt might act as a barrier to services for some of the clients targeted by the program. A transitional employment program operated in conjunction with a moving program and furniture bank ceased operations this year due to inability to raise sufficient matching funds.

All told, the mix of federal, State, local, and privately fundraised resources supported 246 (28-30) units of shelter for individuals (families), 107 (10-12) units of transitional housing for individuals (families), and 66 (11) units of permanent supported housing for individuals (families).

During FY 04, Continuum of Care Providers helped 136 homeless individuals (including at least 73 chronically homeless persons) and 84 homeless families transition into permanent housing.

In FY04, the Cambridge *Multi-Service Center* (MSC) used State and local dollars, to pay for

- homelessness prevention activities;
- assistance securing housing; and
- legal services to help maintain tenancies

that helped prevent the homelessness of over 150 at-risk individuals and 350 at-risk families.

**City of Cambridge Funds:** A total of over **\$481,000** in FY2004 *City funding* including:

- \$256,848 for personnel,
- \$75,000 for rental assistance to at-risk and homeless persons,
- \$50,000 for purchased legal services for clients, and
- close to \$100,000 for other expenses associated with operation of the Multi-Service Center, including for rent, utilities, and other operating costs.

**Community Development Block Grant:** A total of **\$61,726** in FY2004 *Community Development Block Grant* (CDBG) *funding* including;

- \$53,451 for salaries & benefits; and
- \$8,275 in other operating expenses.

**Housing Assistance Program:** A total of **\$170,068** in FY 2004 funding for this program (97% for staffing-related costs) derived from a contract with the *State Department of Transitional Assistance* (DTA) *funding* through a sub-contract with CAPIC of Chelsea for:

- Homelessness prevention; and
- Housing-search assistance for families.

**Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance** (MHSA): A Total of **\$76,270** in FY 2004 *MHSA funding* for this program provided:

- 1.5 FTE staff for a 22-bed men's transitional housing program through the *Multi-Service Center*.